

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9186

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 PRETORIA 5452

NODIS - CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PGOV SF WA RH MNUC
SUBJ: SAG RESPONSE TO SEPTEMBER 15 NUCLEAR DEMARCHE

1. AT MEETING THIS AFTERNOON, BRAND FOURIE HANDED ME TWO COMMUNICATIONS, THE TEXTS OF WHICH ARE REPRODUCED BELOW. THE FIRST IS A SHORT LETTER FROM PIK BOTHA TO THE SECRETARY ANSWERING HIS LETTER OF SEPT 15. THE SECOND IS A LONG COMMUNICATION FROM PM VORSTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER RESPONDING TO OUR SEPT 15 AIDE MEMOIRE ON NUCLEAR MATTERS, AS WELL AS DISCUSSING THE NAMIBIAN AND RHODESIAN PROBLEMS, AND US POLICY TOWARD SOUTH AFRICA IN POLEMICAL TERMS.

2. IN SEPTEL WILL BE COVERED OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS MADE BY FOURIE ON THE NUCLEAR QUESTION. IN STILL SEPARATE CABLES I AM REPORTING WHAT HE HAD TO SAY ON THE KAUNDA-SMITH MEETING AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN NAMIBIA, BOTH SUBJECTS WHICH HE RAISED DURING WAHT TURNED OUT TO BE A GENERAL TOUR D'HORIZON.

3. TEXT OF BOTHA LETTER TO SECRETARY:
BEGIN TEXT: DEAR CYRUS,
IN YOUR LETTER OF SEPTEMBER 15, 1977, YOU INDICATED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD ASKED YOU TO CONVEY APPRECIATION FOR THE ASSURANCES GIVEN BY PRIME MINISTER VORSTER REGARDING
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SOUTH AFRICA'S PEACEFUL NUCLEAR INTENTIONS. I SUBMITTED YOUR LETTER AND THE ACCOMPANYING AIDE-MEMOIRE TO MY PRIME MINISTER AND I WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD BE KIND ENOUGH TO TRANSMIT THE ATTACHED MESSAGE, CONTAINING HIS REACTIONS, TO PRESIDENT CARTER. THE MESSAGE ALSO REFERS TO THE QUESTIONS OF RHODESIA AND SOUTH WEST AFRICA - MATTERS DEALT WITH IN AN EARLIER EXCHANGE OF LETTERS

WITH THE PRESIDENT.

I WISH TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION PARTICULARLY TO THE CONCLUDING SENTENCE IN PARAGRAPH 5 OF THE MESSAGE IN WHICH IT IS SUGGESTED THAT AN IN-DEPTH DISCUSSION BY OUR OFFICIALS ON NUCLEAR ENERGY MATTERS COULD BE USEFUL. IT HAS OCCURRED TO ME THAT PERHAPS YOU MAY WISH TO CONSIDER ASKING AMBASSADOR GERARD C SMITH TO VISIT US FOR THIS PURPOSE.

YOURS SINCERELY

R F BOTHA

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS END TEXT

4. TEXT OF VORSTER LETTER TO PRESIDENT:

BEGIN TEXT: DEAR ME. PRESIDENT,

1. I HAVE RECEIVED THE MESSAGE CONVEYED THROUGH MY FOREIGN MINISTER BY SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE ON THE 15TH SEPTEMBER 1977 REGARDING SOUTH AFRICA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAMME.

2. YOU WILL RECALL THAT PURSUANT TO REPRESENTATIONS MADE BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, WE FORMALLY ADVISED IT IN AUGUST THAT SOUTH AFRICA DID NOT HAVE, NOR DID IT INTEND TO DEVELOP, A NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICE FOR ANY PURPOSE, PEACEFUL OR OTHERWISE; THAT THE SO-CALLED KALAHARI FACILITY WAS NOT A TESTING GROUND FOR NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS; AND THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE ANY NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE TESTING OF ANY KIND IN SOUTH AFRICA.

3. FURTHERMORE, ON THE 24TH AUGUST 1977, I REITERATED THESE ASSURANCES IN A PUBLIC STATEMENT. AT THE SAME TIME
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I FOCUSED ATTENTION ON THE NEED FOR GOODWILL, TRUST, CO-OPERATION AND THE NECESSITY OF HONOURING COMMITMENTS AND OBLIGATIONS BY ALL STATES WITH AN INTEREST IN THE PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR ENERGY.

IN THIS CONNECTION I DREW ATTENTION TO A SERIES OF DISCRIMINATORY STEPS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA, E.G. -

(1) UNWILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS TO SUPPLY SOUTH AFRICA WITH THE CONTRACTED FUEL ELEMENTS FOR THE RESEARCH REACTOR SAFARI I, THUS SERIOUSLY AFFECTING OUR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME;

(2) IGNORING OF COMMITMENTS BY THE NUCLEAR POWERS TO FACILITATE THE FULLEST POSSIBLE EXCHANGE OF EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFORMATION FOR THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AS PROVIDED FOR UNDER ARTICLE IV(2) OF THE NPT;

(3) THE OUSTING OF SOUTH AFRICA FROM THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY IN FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF THE AGENCY'S STATUTE;

SOME EFFORTS WERE MADE TO JUSTIFY THIS DISCRIMINATORY STEP ON THE PRETEXT THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAD

NOT ADHERED TO THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY, CONVENIENTLY FORGETTING THAT, FOR EXAMPLE, NO LESS THAN 13 OF THE 34 MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HAVE EITHER NOT RATIFIED OR ACCEDED TO THE NPT - INCLUDING EGYPT, WHO REPLACED SOUTH AFRICA ON THE BOARD.

YOU WILL ALSO BE AWARE THAT IN SPITE OF INDIA'S NON-ADHERENCE TO THE NPT AND HER EXPLOSION OF A NUCLEAR DEVICE, SHE WAS SUPPLIED BY THE UNITED STATES WITH ENRICHED FUEL FOR HER TARAPUR REACTOR; (4) THE EXTREME PRESSURE WHICH IS EXERTED ON SOUTH AFRICA TO ACCEDE TO THE NPT AS AGAINST THE APPARENT LACK OF PRESSURE ON NON-NPT MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE IAEA TO ADHERE TO SECRET

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THE TREATY;

(5) FROM THE LATEST U.S. DEMARCHE (THAT OF 15 SEPTEMBER 1977) IT IS CLEAR THAT IN SPITE OF A FIRM CONTRACT WITH ERDA, THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT SUPPLY LOW ENRICHED FUEL FOR THE TWO KOEBERG POWER STATIONS UNLESS SOUTH AFRICA ACCEDES TO THE NPT; (6) IT HAS NOT PASSED UNNOTICED THAT SOUTH AFRICA, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SUPPLIERS OF URANIUM, AND A POTENTIAL EXPORTER OF ENRICHMENT EQUIPMENT, IS EXCLUDED FROM EVERY GROUP FORMED FOR CONSIDERING MATTERS RELATING TO NON-PROLIFERATION. ONE CAN NOT ESCAPE THE FEELING THAT A SYSTEMATIC ATTEMPT IS BEING MADE TO EXCLUDE SOUTH AFRICA FROM ALL DELIBERATIONS IN THE ATOMIC ENERGY FIELD. THE LATEST EXAMPLE IS THE EXCLUSION OF SOUTH AFRICA FROM THE INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE EVALUATION, WHICH EVALUATION IS THE SUBJECT OF CONSULTATION WITH 36 OF THE AGENCY'S MEMBER STATES.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9187

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 PRETORIA 5452

NODIS - CHEROKEE

4. NEVERTHELESS, IN MY STATEMENT OF 24 AUGUST 1977, I MADE IT CLEAR THAT SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS WITH THE UNITED STATES THE QUESTION OF OUR ACCESSION TO THE NPT, BUT ADDED THAT DISCRIMINATORY STEPS, INCLUDING THOSE MENTIONED BY ME, WOULD ACTUALLY BE RAISED AND WOULD HAVE TO BE SORTED OUT AT THE SAME TIME. I WAS SINCERELY HOPING THAT THIS WOULD LEAD TO A FRANK DISCUSSION BETWEEN OUR GOVERNMENTS IN AN EFFORT TO FACILITATE OUR ACCESSION TO THE NPT.

5. HOWEVER, THE UNITED STATES DEMARCHE OF 15 SEPTEMBER SEEMS TO IMPLY THAT WE MUST FIRST ADHERE TO THE TREATY, AND PURSUANT THERETO SOME, I REPEAT SOME OF THE POINTS RAISED BY ME CAN THEREAFTER BE DISCUSSED. IT THEREFORE APPEARS TO US THAT THE UNITED STATES WISHES TO CONCENTRATE ONLY ON THE NPT, IGNORING THE REST. SUCH AN APPROACH WOULD NOT BE PRACTICABLE.

I NOTE THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT'S ANXIETY OVER THE VALINDABA PILOT PLANT PERSISTS. THERE IS NOTHING SINISTER ABOUT THE PLANT, AND WE HAVE OFTEN STATED ITS PURPOSE, AND I PERSONALLY OFFERED TO SHARE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES THE KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY ACQUIRED.

I HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT IF OVVICIAL UNITED STATES SPOKESMEN WERE TO REFRAIN FROM QUESTIONING SOUTH AFRICA'S GOOD FAITH, AND INSTEAD WERE TO AGREE TO AN IN-DEPTH DISCUSSION BY OUR OFFICIALS ON THESE MATTERS, A MAJOR STEP COULD BE TAKEN TOWARDS OPENING THE WAY FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S ADHERENCE TO THE SECRET

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SOUTH WEST AFRICA AND RHODESIA

6. WE RECENTLY CONCLUDED THE LATEST ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS WITH THE FIVE WESTERN MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON THE QUESTION OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA, AND WE PUT FORWARD A SET OF CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS CONCERNING THE ATTAINMENT OF INDEPENDENCE FOR THE TERRITORY IN A PEACEFUL MANNER. THESE SUGGESTIONS, PARTICULARLY THAT RELATING TO SECURITY AND SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES, OF WHICH YOU WILL NO DOUBT BE APPRISED BY AMBASSADOR MCHENRY, SUPPLEMENT THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES TO WHICH SOUTH AFRICA HAS ALREADY COMMITTED HERSELF IN REGARD TO SOUTH WEST AFRICA:

- (A) THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO SOUTH WEST AFRICA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, IN ANY CASE BEFORE THE END OF 1978;
- (B) INDEPENDENCE TO BE GRANTED TO THE TERRITORY AS A WHOLE;

(C) ELECTIONS ON THE BASIS OF ONE-MAN-ONE-VOTE COUNTRY-WIDE FOR A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY;

(D) REMOVAL OF DISCRIMINATION ON BASIS OF COLOUR;

(E) THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL SATISFYING HIMSELF ON THE FAIRNESS OF THE ELECTIONS;

(F) THE RELEASE OF DETAINEES AND POLITICAL PRISONERS, IF ANY, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE TERRITORY; (I.E. THOSE HELD BY SWAPO AND OTHER ENTITIES IN TANZANIA, ZAMBIA, ANGOLA ETC. AS WELL AS THOSE DETAINED BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES.)

(G) THE RETURN OF ALL SOUTH WEST AFRICANS TO PARTICIPATE PEACEFULLY IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS;

(H) THE APPOINTMENT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF A PANEL OF JURISTS TO DECIDE UPON DISPUTES, FOR EXAMPLE ON FAIRNESS OF ELECTIONEERING, STATUS OF CONVICTED PRISONERS, ETC.

7. ALSO IN THE CASE OF RHODESIA, SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE AND AMBASSADOR YOUNG WOULD HAVE INFORMED YOU OF THE RESPONSE.
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SIBLE ROLE SOUTH AFRICA HAS TRIED TO PLAY IN ORDER TO FACILITATE A SETTLEMENT.

WE NEVER ASKED FOR A QUID PRO QUO FOR OUR CO-OPERATION AND EFFORTS IN SEEKING SOLUTIONS FOR THE SOUTH WEST AFRICAN AND RHODESIAN QUESTIONS. THIS DID NOT, HOWEVER, MEAN THAT IN SPITE OF OUR UNCEASING EFFORTS TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE - EFFORTS ACKNOWLEDGED BY YOU YOURSELF - SOUTH AFRICA WOULD FACE INCREASING HOSTILITY FROM THOSE VERY COUNTRIES WITH WHOM IT IS ENDEAVOURING TO RESOLVE THESE PROBLEMS.

8. WE CANNOT ESCAPE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE UNITED STATES AS WELL AS CERTAIN OF THE OTHER WESTERN STATES CONCERNED, WHILE EXPECTING OUR FURTHER ACTIVE CO-OPERATION IN THE SEARCH FOR PEACE, NEVERTHELESS CONTINUE TO TAKE STEPS WHICH WE CANNOT INTERPRET AS OTHERWISE THAN HOSTILE AND WHICH ENDANGER OUR CONTINUED CO-OPERATION. THIS WAS MY CLEAR IMPRESSION IN VIENNA DURING THE TALKS WITH VICE-PRESIDENT MONDALE AND IT IS REGULARLY BEING CONFIRMED BY REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON, AS FOR EXAMPLE ON THE EXTENSION OF THE SO-CALLED "GREY AREAS" IN TRADE BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES, THE HOLDING OF SPECIAL HEARINGS AND OTHER DELIBERATELY DISCRIMINATORY AND EVEN VINDICTIVE ACTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. IN LINE WITH THESE MEASURES, AND ENCOURAGED, IT SEEMS, BY THE UNITED STATES, THE MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY ARE NOW CONSIDERING STEPS TO CURTAIL OUR TRADITIONAL TRADING TIES WITH WESTERN EUROPE.

9. IT WOULD SEEM, THEREFORE, THAT THE UNITED STATES OFFICIALLY HOLD THE VIEW THAT STABILITY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE FUTURE OF OUR COUNTRY IS TO BE SACRIFICED IN THE HOPE OF STOPPING SOVIET EXPANSIONISM. THIS IS A VAIN HOPE. ON THE CONTRARY, BY SIMPLISTICALLY INSISTING ON MAJORITY RULE

IN SOUTH AFRICA, THE UNITED STATES WILL CUT THE GROUND FROM
UNDER MODERATE BLACK AND WHITE LEADERS AND PAVE THE WAY FOR
CONFRONTATION AND EVENTUAL CONFLICT ON A CATASTROPHIC SCALE.
YOU WILL APPRECIATE THAT SUCH AN APPROACH AND THE TYPE OF
ACTION REFERRED TO ARE MAKING IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT, IF
NOT ALTOGETHER IMPOSSIBLE, FOR MY COUNTRY TO CONTINUE THE
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CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IT HAS ACCEPTED. IT WOULD THEREFORE BE
A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO OUR PEACE EFFORTS IF AN ASSURANCE
COULD BE GIVEN THAT THIS CAMPAIGN AGAINST US WILL CEASE.
IN CONCLUSION, MR PRESIDENT, I WISH TO ASSURE YOU THAT I
VALUE THIS FURTHER OPPORTUNITY OF SHARING MY THOUGHTS WITH
YOU.

YOURS SINCERELY,
J. VORSTER END TEXT

5. SIGNED COPIES OF ORIGINALS BEING TRANSMITTED BY
POUCH OCTOBER 14.
BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, CAT-C, DEMARCHES, NUCLEAR TEST SITES, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, CHEROKEE 10/13/77
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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 13-Oct-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
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